

	<p>United States Department of Agriculture</p> <p>Forest Service</p>	<h1>News Release</h1>	<p>KLAMATH NATIONAL FOREST</p> <p>1711 S. Main Street, Yreka, CA 96097 (530) 841-6131 www.fs.usda.gov/klamath</p>	
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Lake Mountain Lookout Centennial



Yreka, CA- The Klamath National Forest is celebrating 2012 as the 100th season of operation for the Lake Mountain Lookout, the oldest operating fire lookout in California. Construction on the original stone house, which now serves as the lookout's basement, began in 1911 and was completed in 1912. The lookout has been used continuously ever since, aside from a closure for safety during the fire siege of 1987.

In 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps completed the 14 foot by 14 foot cab that rests atop the original stone house. This was an impressive feat considering the road to the lookout wasn't completed until 1963. Up until that time, all supplies arrived via pack animal or by foot over miles of mountain trail.

Lake Mountain was added to the National Historic Lookout Register in 1996 and has recently become eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Though the stairway was remodeled in 1973 and the cab was refurbished in 2009, the appearance of the lookout remains as it did in 1933. Under consultation with the California State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO), the roof and windows were replaced to match the original materials and design of the building.

Nancy Hood, the person who staffs the Lake Mountain Lookout, also holds records for longevity. She has worked 54 consecutive seasons as a fire lookout (on several different towers) on the Klamath National Forest. She has spent the last 20 at Lake Mountain. Ms. Hood's length of service as a fire lookout on one Forest is believed to be the longest in the history of the US Forest Service.

The Klamath holds another record in the world of lookouts. In 1913, Hallie Daggett was the first female fire lookout hired by the U.S. Forest Service. Her first assignment was to staff the Eddy Gulch Lookout on the Salmon River Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest and she spent the next fifteen fire seasons there.

Many people are surprised to learn that fire lookouts are still staffed. It's often assumed in this digital age, airplanes or satellites do the job of spotting fire starts. For the dedicated men and women who stand watch over our forests, it's the years of experience that count. Many spend decades practicing their craft, committing to memory details of local geography and weather patterns. Skilled experienced lookouts can spot a tiny column or wisp of smoke within minutes, pinpoint its location, and help fire fighters navigate to the source of the fire, often doing it more effectively than any other detection technology. For the last 100 years lookout towers like Lake Mountain and highly dedicated lookouts like Nancy Hood have remained an invaluable resource to the U.S. Forest Service.



Photos Clockwise (starting at top left): Lake Mountain Stone Cabin prior to 1933 - Siskiyou County Historical Society Collection, (center) Lake Mountain, year unknown - Siskiyou County Historical Society Collection, (top right) Lake Mountain, September 2008 - Ron Kemnow, (bottom right) Lookout, Nancy Hood poses in a hole cut in the rock, designed as a shelter from lightning, July 2012 - Kerry Greene, (bottom left) Lookout, Nancy Hood behind her Osbourne Firefinder, July 2012 – Kerry Greene